2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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when the mosquitoes are really bad the cattle are tied for the night in the open, generally in the centre of the village. Fires of dried cow-dung are kept smouldering all night, and the herdsmen smear themselves with the ashes. In the dry season when the grass gives out the young men and boys drive the cattle long distances to fresh pastures; the Shilluk of the White Nile cross to the eastern bank, those of the Sobat migrate to the lagoons to the south of Sobat.

Fish are speared and trapped, and the hippopotamus, the flesh of which is greatly esteemed, is harpooned. The Shilluk, who are by no means expert trackers, hunt by surrounding an area and spearing the animals as they attempt to escape from the contracting circle, but game procured in this manner plays only a small part in their diet.

The Shilluk are excellent craftsmen. The thatching of the royal shrines and those of Nyakang is perhaps the best in the riverain portion of the Sudan, and this applies equally to their iron work, though they do not extract the metal from the ore but obtain it by trade—formerly from the Dinka, now from the white man. Their spears are the best that we saw in the southern Sudan. There is no special group of smiths, and iron-workers are not despised. They make good but not remarkable pottery. Their dug-out canoes are necessarily small, as the only wood is the *doleib* palm (*Borassus flabellifer*). In the north, where other wood is available in small quantities, the sides of the canoe are commonly heightened by built-on strips; possibly this practice is modern, but it is not absolutely new, as we noted it more than twenty years ago. Besides canoes, the Shilluk make small rafts of ambatch which resemble the reed rafts of the ancient Egyptians.

Regulation of Public Life

The Shilluk king is absolute head—temporal and spiritual—of a state whose territory is divided into a number of provinces, each administered by a chief directly responsible to the sovereign and acting as his proxy. We are indebted to Mr. Heasty for the following account of the areas into which the country is divided. The two main divisions are Lwak and Gar. The former comprises all the country south of and including the capital Fashoda, with its provincial capital Kwom, and here resides one of the great territorial chiefs mentioned

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

the hottest month of the year. June to September constitutes the rainy season, and from October to December the larger part of the country is flooded with water, but the marshes and smaller Khors[1] all dry up by April. From November to April the climate is not unhealthy for Europeans. During the wet season mosquitoes are numerous. Malaria and black water fever are the diseases most dangerous to white people.

SOIL

The country is a plain with only inconsiderable elevations, on which the villages of the natives are built. The soil is black and fertile near the river and the khors, back from the water courses it is in most places poorer, sometimes sandy.

VEGETATION

The chief vegetation is high grass, interspersed with shrubs. A light forest of acacia trees is found mainly along the Nile. The acacia is the chief representative of the tree-flora: heglig (Balanites aegyptiaca), sont-acacia (Acacia arabica), Talh (Acacia Seyal), different kinds of gum-acacias, etc. A characteristic feature of the landscape are groups of doleib- and dom-palms (Borassus flabellifer and Hyphaene Thebaica); a beautiful tree is the mahogany tree (Khaya senegalensis); it is most useful as timber, but seems to be rather rare in the Shilluk country; other notable trees are: different kinds of Ficus (Sycomore fig), the ardeib tree (Tamarindus indica), nabag (a fruit tree) etc. The vegetation on the river is most luxuriant. Though this is not the region of the sudd, yet the river is at most times largely covered with single plants and swimming islands, formed of papyrus, sambach (Herminiera Elaphroxylon), several kinds of reeds, lotus, Umm Sof (Vossia procera), Potamogeton, Ottelia, and many others. The floating vegetation often serves birds for a fishing place. Trees are much hampered in their growth by the fires which the natives light while the grass is dry; the reason for burning the grass is to hunt up game, and to get the ground cleared for cultivation.

ANIMALS

The country being thickly populated, game is not very numerous. But at some distance from the settlements large animals are still frequent, chiefly near the river towards Lake No; the neighbourhood of Kaka and north of it are also rich in game. Elephants, giraffes, buffaloes are met with, though not very frequently; antelopes and gazelles abound: bushbuck (Tragelaphus scriptus), reedbuck (Cervicapra bohor), white-eared cob (Cobus leucotis), ariel (Gazella soemmeringi), dorcas (G. dorcas), isabelline gazelle (G. isabella), oryx, waterbuck (Cobus defassa), Mrs. Gray's waterbuck (Cobus maria), gazelle rufifrons, roan antelope (Hippotragus equinus bakeri), hartebeest (Bubalis jacksoni), tiang or Bastard Hartebeest (Damaliscus tiang), Orbi antelope (Ourebia) etc. Of the carnivorous family the most notable are: lion, leopard, jackal, hyena, fox, Zorilla (a little black-and-white animal resembling the American skunk),

[1] Khor (Arab) = water course drying up in the rainless season.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

221 weighty ceremonies, in order to keep the crocodiles away; this forms an im-
233 portant part of the duties of the witch-doctor; vide page 172. All the youths and boys over ten years accompany the herds, leaving their homes for several weeks or even months, and enjoying the free life in temporary huts. When after the
578 first rains the new grass springs up, they return home. The struggle for the best pasture grounds very often becomes the cause of bitter quarrels, and has in the past not unfrequently led to tribal wars.

231 GOATS The Shilluk goats have rather high legs, they almost unvariably look thin and not well fed; their colour is mostly grey, but black ones too are not un-
SHEEP frequent. The sheep have no wool, but hair. They have a kind of mane on shoulder, neck and breast, the rest of the body being covered with short hair.
FOWLS Most sheep are white, brown-white, or black-white. — A race of small fowls is kept, but the natives do not make much of them; many chickens are stolen
DOGS by snakes and other small animals. — Dogs are very numerous, they are a kind of greyhound, of red or yellow colour, and have a black, long snout. They are exceedingly quick in running and most clever in jumping. They overtake gazelles with easiness, and are much used in hunting.

224 HUNTING Hunting is practised by all men occasionally, but is, as a rule, not very
[411] successful. They use spears, clubs, and traps in killing or catching animals. Sometimes, chiefly in procuring animals whose skins form part of the revenue of the king, all the people of a village assemble for a hunting match, vide page 125; a large circle is formed, and the animals inside it, when wishing to escape, are killed. When an animal is wounded, but runs away, they will persecute it for
[643] days, till it breaks down. The skin of a killed leopard belongs to the king, and could, at least formerly, be worn by privates only by special permission of the king. A lion's skin is considered as evil, and is not worn.

225 Hippopotamus hunting is done by combined parties in canoes, harpooning the animal and dispatching him with spears, when he comes to the surface to breathe.

226 FISHING Their way of fishing is that with the round barbed spear, and with traps, which are made of corn stalks and reed. Fish-spearing is done in muddy water, where they cannot see anything below the surface, and therefore cannot aim. But nevertheless by this rude mode they sometimes have good results, the fish in the White Nile and Sobat being numerous and large. Sometimes they carry on fishing during the night time by holding burning grass-torches over the water, and thus enticing the fish, which are then speared. In recent time nets
[177] and fishhooks are bought from the white people, and are employed in fishing.

463 HANDICRAFTS The Shilluks practise a great number of crafts, which are carried on in families for generations, the father and mother imparting their skill to their children.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

*539 *Kine: à, dɔ̱ch, kɛ̱t, kɔ̱lú jwɔk! Ka gɛ bɛ̱nɔ. Ka gɛ wane fɔ̱te gen, ka būl gɔ̱ch, ka tɛ̱rɔ chɔ̱nɔ kí bûl. Ka gɛ lɔ̱gɔ: wuna yik tɛ̱rɔ, é, wó dúɔ̱k, dɛ bɛ̱t peń mɔ̱̄t.*

*539 The people go hunting game, a game for the king, a gyɛk-antelope. And all
● 224 the people go, they are many, and the chiefs address them: "O ye people,
643 (hear) a commandment of the king, concerning the gyɛk-antelope, which belongs
651 to the king: if any man let the game escape, he shall surely be fined!" Then they pray: "O Nyikang, this matter is under your auspices! Do not suffer us to have any mishap! You grandfather of man, kill the game well, so that we may incur no debts! May it be killed well, o Nyikang!" Then a goat is brought, it is speared; a fowl is brought and cut up. Now the hunting-party arises, each part (goes) in a different direction. And when many antelopes have been killed, the people come back, and the chiefs assemble, and the game is brought before them; when they have brought it all, the big (district-) chief divides the animals, and says: "This chief shall take this, and this one shall take that;" then he says: "Tan it!" And they tan it. When they have finished tanning, the skins are brought before the chief for examination. The chief (when he has examined them) says: "All right!" Again he says: "Shall we not bring them (to the king)?" He seizes a cow, which they take with them (to Fashoda); all the chiefs assemble, and go to Fashoda. When they arrive there, they ask for permission to enter (the royal court). It is said to the king: "The chiefs have come." They greet the king: "Our Lord, we have come." He asks: "What do you bring?" They answer: "Who have brought royal goods." The king asks: "How many?" They reply: "Sixty." He answers: "Very well." Then the king [illegible] a big
[576] steer, and gives it to the chiefs. The steer is killed, and the chiefs stay to eat
[644] it, together with a cow. Then they ask the king for permission to go: "Our lord, shall we not go now? (we will go now!)". The king answers: "Why, hold fast (to) God (that is: stay!)" So the chiefs remain; and beer is strained, and they stay to drink. Afterward the king says: "Well, all right, go now with God!"

When they come home and approach their villages, the drum is beaten, and the people dance to the drum; then they address the people: "O ye people, we have returned; may the country live in peace!" [1]

28. Making Boats for the King.

*539 *A kɛ̱t tɛ̱rɔ bɛ ńwɔt kí yat, yɛ̱te kwɛ̀r, ka tɛ̱rɔ ńùdɛ̀, ka yat ɛ̱̄l, ká tɛ̱rù bɛ̱nò, ka tɛ̱rɔ wapɛ̱ fack. Ka jāgɔ chwɔ́l, ka yat tyɛr ká è nɛ̱nɔ, ka e kɔpɔ mɛ̀, ka e ko: kwań yɛ̱t ak! Ka kwɔ́ń, ka e ko: mɔk an ba mɔk rɛ̱t, ka mɔk an tyɛ́i, ka gɛ kwɔ́ch, ka gɛ bɛ̱nɔ gín keau Bachōdɔ.*

[1] The *dyɛk*-antelope belongs to the king, out of its hide clothes for the king's wives are made.

13: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1920 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

756 Many of the people say that if a man refuses to consult the medicine men, God will be angry with that person, and leave him to get along without help, which means that he will be cut off from all supernatural aid.

Many of the witch doctors are specialists, while others undertake to work charms for many different things. In practically every thing undertaken the witch doctor is consulted. If a man is going on [484 751] a journey he lets the medicine man work over him to give him safety from dangers seen and unseen. Very frequently before a [224] hunt the witch doctor assures them of success in the chase, and in the hunting of dangerous animals he ties the quarry so that it will not be able to injure the hunters. A thief who hopes to steal a cow often goes to a witch doctor, and has a charm wrought over him so that the people of the village will not be aroused by any [726] sound he may make. The witch doctor gives victory when the people are going out to war. He also detects the men, who are to be killed in the fight, and he works a charm over them, which causes the impending death to be averted. The power to kill by magic resides in the witch doctor, and many other things are done by them. Diseases are supposed to yield to their charms. The [752 755] power to cure snake bites, and to heal a burn by spitting on it are special powers belonging to only a few. Many are able to give a fetish, which protects its owner.

The witch doctor will not treat himself when ill, and he does not treat the members of his own family. He goes to some other witch doctor to be helped.

756 The fetish plays a very large part in the work of a witch doctor. 789 He gives the little charms for many different purposes. They are supposed to give protection on a journey, to insure success in courtship, to protect from wild animals, to insure a favourable judgment, to protect cattle in crossing a river, and many other powers are ascribed to them. However a fetish is only effective for the one purpose for which it was obtained.

756 One medicine man, when asked how he cured a patient, said: "I first collect a small fee, and then I work over the patient. When the patient recovers I return and collect a large fee".

The dismissal of a patient is attended with some ceremony. The patient and witch doctor make a trip to the river in the evening.

19: Howell & Thomson E, G-5 (1943-1944) 1946
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643 villages by the way. One of the most noticeable features of the activities surrounding Nyikang is the principle that he and his lieutenants are given, or take, what they want from Shilluk as they pass. This [173] embassy to the north may well have its origin in a raiding party, and the two sections, whose duty it is to perform this journey, may have been obliged to render this form of military service to Nyikang. [177] Nowadays the silver and the cloth which were originally plunder, are bought from Kosti with money supplied by the *reth*, and contributed [437] by Shilluk north of Kaka. Other requirements are ostrich feathers procured from the country round Kaka for the head pieces of the images of Nyikang and Dak, by the people of Mwomo, and ivory for bracelets to be worn by various functionaries at the installation itself. This was provided from the tusks of elephants slain by the Shilluk in 1938 [1] They are very rare in Shilluk country. Bamboo is brought from Fungor in the eastern Nuba Mountains for the bodies of Nyikang's image, and those of his sons Dak and Cal. This is brought by the [283] people of Akwobai. Certain sacred ropes made from the fibre of dom palms, which grow round Fanyikang, are brought by "Dak", who with his followers makes a special pilgrimage some two months before the ceremonies.

643 An obligation lies on the chiefs of Fanyikang to produce skins
224 of the female Mrs. Gray antelope from Fanyikang Island. These are
292 required as the high robes of honour of the *reth*. They are worn by the *reth* himself and all the important people in the ceremony. To be presented with a Mrs. Gray skin is a mark of the greatest esteem. They are royal game, and are only killed in the first year of a new *reth's* reign. On this occasion doubtless to save any complications with the government, which strictly preserves these antelopes, the operation was all over before the administration had word of it.

643 The houses of Fashoda had to be tidied up and new fences built,
356 but no new building in mud was done.

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[132] 1. In 1938 a few elephants invaded Shilluk country near Malakal, for the first time for many years.

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

with their harpoons and spears and driving the fish before them. The fish that escape the spears and are caught in the nets are collected, and the operation is repeated again and again until the late afternoon when either the fishing or the fishermen are exhausted and the party returns laden with the burden of the catch. It sometimes happens that the fishing is not successful, and the fishermen return with a very poor load, or even nothing at all. Once I met such a party coming back dejected from a full day's fruitless toil; all that they had to show as the result of eight hours' strenuous work in the sun was a large rat dangling from the end of a spear. On another occasion the fishing had hardly begun in earnest before one of the men was seized by a large crocodile. I am sorry to say that his companions in their panic ran off and left him to his fate, but he attacked the brute with his spear and managed to free himself. Needless to say, the fishing was abandoned for that day. The Sisters nursed the victim, whose thigh was badly lacerated, and after some months, thanks to their care, he recovered completely. When these communal fishing expeditions take place, the school might as well be closed for all the learning that is done. It is just as impossible to keep the boys to their lessons, as it would be to keep a class of English boys if a cup-tie were being played on the school football field. So when the vanguard of the fishing party passes the school, we call it a day and send the pupils off. If the results are good, there are empty places in the classroom for many days afterwards, for the boys who live locally stay at home as long as the good living lasts.

For the Shilluk youth who finds community fishing a dull affair, in spite of the dangers of being seized by a crocodile or being harpooned by an over-excited companion, there are always the hazards and profits of hunting hippopotamus. The hippo which are so numerous in the Nile, and particularly in the Bahr-el-Gazal, are strictly royal game. The Shilluk may hunt if they wish, but a large portion of the carcase must be sent to the king in Fashoda, and a hunter who refused to do this, or tried to conceal his 'bag', would

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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soon find the king's wrath heavy upon him and his cattle taken to satisfy the outrage on the royal dignity. Hippo hunting is done by night as well as by day. At night the hunters lie in wait for their victim as he emerges from the river to eat and sleep. On the morning of the day of the hunt, one or two men will go out early to look for the place where the hippo has lain up during the night, and from it they trace the path he has made through the tall grass and reeds to the water. In the evening four or five hunters go to the place and lie hidden in the grass. As the beast comes up from the water they stab it with a short, heavy harpoon, and if it falls, hamstring and then kill it. To the shaft of the harpoon is attached a long line with floats of ambach wood tied at intervals. If the wounded animal is able to plunge back into the river the hunters will follow its flight in their canoes, provided there is a good moon. When the hippo surfaces for breath they attack him again with a harpoon, trying to strike him in the back of the neck and in the nose, and this second attack usually finishes him off. He submerges again, but in a couple of hours floats to the surface like an enormous balloon and is easily pushed into the shallows, and there left to be cut up at leisure the next day. The hunters in the meantime go off in search of another victim, and thus in one night may take three or four beasts. If the night is too dark for them to pursue their victim, they leave it till the morning when they search the river carefully for the floats which are sometimes found tangled up in the long grass on the bank. In the daytime they will boldly strike at a hippo from their canoe, as he surfaces to breathe, and pursue him, attacking constantly until he is killed. The people of the village nearest the spot where the carcase is floated ashore assist in cutting it up, and receive a portion of the meat and hide as their reward. The choicest parts, including most of the fat, belong to the king and must be sent to Fashoda; the chief, too, levies a generous share for himself, and the rest belongs to the hunters.

Of course a hippo hunt is not always such a one-sided affair, for occasionally the wounded animal will turn on its

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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224 tormentors and overturn and smash the canoe, killing or maiming its occupants. In Tonga I once saw a youth whose shoulder had almost been torn away by a hippopotamus. With some companions he had been hunting in the Bahr-el-Gazal when the hippo they were attacking charged the canoe and flung its occupants into the water. He had the misfortune to fall near the enraged animal which seized his shoulder with its powerful teeth and tore the flesh. He had been taken first to the mission of Yoynyang where the priest dressed his wound as best he could, and then brought on to Tonga. When I saw him he was sitting quite impassively, [152] enduring the pain with stoicism as the Sister dressed his [743] torn shoulder while waiting for a boat to take him to the hospital in Malakal.

224 787 One peculiar feature of a hippo hunt is that the hunters, before beginning their operations, sacrifice a hen by drowning it in the river. They then bury it in the reeds at the river's edge and one (sometimes two) of them, shaking convulsively, goes into a kind of ecstatic frenzy during which he foretells the number of beasts that will be killed; one may plump for three, two large ones and a small, the other for five, three big and two small. It is remarkable that a single 'shaker's' forecast is often completely accurate, though whether this is due to his making a lucky guess, or being prompted by his guardian angel, I would hesitate to say. It is significant, however, that in later life many of these [756] amateur prophets become witch doctors.

461 'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy' is a saying as true of the Shilluk as of any other race of mankind, and after all his sowing and reaping, building and thatching, fishing and hunting, his 'capacity for innocent enjoyment is just as great as any honest man's'. A European travelling through Shilluk country on a hot, windless afternoon and seeing a cloud of dust rising into the air at some distance before him might wonder what freak of nature was causing a dust storm in that particular spot, when all around was so still and breathless. Approaching nearer to the phenomenon,